Under the Blossom.

BY MARGARET HAYCRAFT, AUTHOR OF "LINDENHOLM," "AMARANTH'S GARDEN," ETC.

CHAPTER V.

MR. CLIFFORD-LEICESTER.

IRIS was a good deal disturbed by the information that John Hyldon was likely to come up to town. Somehow those days that once seemed to her summer bright, when the young journalist wooed and won her, belonged to a past which appeared strangely different from the brilliancy of the present. "I have everything now that heart can wish," the girl felt, looking round at the rich curtains and carpets, the beautiful pictures and the dainty appointments to which she had grown accustomed; "I can't think how ever I endured the dreary teaching life, and all the petty, worrying cares of home! Nelly is not nearly so sensitive as I am, I believe she really enjoys planning and contriving how to make the most out of a little; but I hope such an existence as that is over for me now for ever! and I believe it is, if—if—" and here Iris fell into a dream in which a certain Mr. Clifford-Leicester, a wealthy bachelor who was a frequent visitor in St. Alwys' Gardens, figured conspicuously.

"I did not know my own mind when I became engaged to Jack," she reflected. "Mother was quite right—an engagement is something to be thought over carefully and seriously—and I feel I decided in that case too quickly. I dare say Jack has changed *his* mind too by this time, for he does not often write now, and he must see it would only be romantic folly for us to continue engaged. 'Love in a cottage' sounds well enough in a story, but I am not fitted for a hard, struggling life, and somehow—somehow—I know Mr. Clifford-Leicester likes me."

Other people were likewise aware of that fact. Mrs. Danyers was secretly very proud that the fair girl introduced to society beneath her wing should have attracted the most eligible *parti* available, so far as wealth was concerned. And Leila knew also, by some subtle intuition which to the quiet girl was a pain none guessed or understood, that the kind-hearted, honourable, high-principled man she had somehow set up as her hero, came to St. Alwys' Gardens with no special interest in seeing *her*, but because the house held for him such attractions in those eyes like dark violets, and the wavy auburn hair, and sweet dimpled face of the girl who was now Mrs. Danyers' petted companion.

It was hard not to be a little jealous of Iris; she seemed to have stolen from Leila her mother's love and caresses, and then to have taken away Max Clifford-Leicester, once her special friend, and her helper and adviser in many a

"A most picturesque effect was the result." *p.* 130.

benevolent scheme. It must be owned that in Leila's heart there was more than one struggle against envy and dislike, as concerned their beautiful young guest; but the girl's life had been given into His keeping whose will is ever the best of all, and whatever she missed of her heart's desire, she could give thanks rejoicingly that all was well, and all would be well for ever. Victorious over jealousy and repining, she even took part at last in arrangements whereby the two could enjoy one another's society, for she had never heard of John Hyldon—she knew of no betrothal tie—and the engagement ring had been missing from the finger of Iris Elwood within three or four days of her coming to town. Somehow it had looked so shabby among those lent to her by Mrs. Danyers.

"Who is that lovely girl with Mrs. Danyers?" was asked again and again, greatly to the gratification of the chaperone. A well-known artist of her acquaintance requested as a favour that he might paint Iris, and a most picturesque effect was the result—the graceful figure was draped in a quaint robe that had belonged to an ancestress of Mrs. Danyers, and the girl's hand held some of her namesake-flowers. The picture was in the Academy, and many would have liked to buy it, but Mrs. Danyers, who loved to fill her rooms with all that was beautiful, had asked the painter to consider it her own property.

Truly Iris Elwood was a grand social success; Mrs. Danyers felt that if Leila had been a failure, she was recompensed now for all her former disappointment, and she loved to array her fair young charge in the becoming attire that so daintily set forth the girlish charms.

"Iris, you will be the making of all your family," she said one day, when some exquisite flowers had been left for the girl, with Mr. Clifford-Leicester's card; "it is quite evident you have made a great impression on a certain friend of ours, and he is in a most satisfactory position—I am sure such a marriage would be a real comfort to your dear mother. Mr. Clifford-Leicester would be able to do so much for the rest, and he is generosity itself. He is of good family, though, being a younger son, he chose to engage in commerce; he is now partner in a firm of Greek merchants, very wealthy and influential, and his character is one highly respected. Really, Iris, I congratulate you from my heart. And you must be married from my house, of course; I daresay your dear mother would like to come up for the ceremony."

A sudden remembrance came to Iris of the merry talks with Nelly and "Mother" about the far-off day when her simple wedding with John Hyldon would take place—how she was to wear some dress that would come in nicely afterwards for "best," and how Nelly and Clover were to be bridesmaids, and Colin was to be "best man." It was doubtful if there could be any honeymoon, beyond Saturday to Monday at the ten-mile distant seaside town of Beachcombe, perhaps—now Mrs. Danyers was talking complacently of Nice and Cannes, for she thought Mr. Clifford-Leicester would "very likely decide upon being married this winter, and long engagements are always a mistake, where everything is so eminently satisfactory."

Iris still wrote sometimes to John Hyldon, but very rarely, and her brief notes had become stiff and constrained, containing little else but a catalogue of the entertainments she attended, and the "delightful people" who were introduced to her. He, too, wrote but seldom, but his letters were always full of the old ring of affection. It was not till Iris let two months pass by without writing, that she detected an altered tone in his letter of anxious inquiry. She felt he was hurt by her silence, but her mind just then was full of a fancy ball where she was to figure as "Daybreak" in wondrous garb of grey and rose, and that letter likewise remained unanswered.

"Jack has gone away from this neighbourhood," wrote Nelly, soon after; "have you two been quarrelling? He seems to be getting on very well, and several papers have asked him for articles, of late; but he looks worried and depressed,—I suppose he misses you sadly, Iris, and I am sure *we* do. Clover has a cold, and seems fretful and irritable. Mother and I have been dressmaking, but the people take so long to pay, and think we should charge almost nothing, because we are friends of theirs! It is time, too, that Colin went to school, and I think we must pocket our pride and send him to the free school, for I do not see how he is to be educated otherwise. I do with as little as I can, and mother eats next to nothing; but it is all we can do to get along,—I only hope Clover will not get worse, for I am sure I do not want that grand-looking young doctor here, knowing all the time that we should have to keep him waiting ever so long for his bill!"

Iris folded the letter with a feeling of pity for Nelly, and relief, as concerned herself, at being away from all the struggles and worries of "making both ends meet."

"Nelly always coddled up the children," she reflected, "and dosed them if the slightest thing were the matter, and Clover likes to be fussed over as an invalid. Fancy that dumpling of a child wanting the doctor! Mother is the best doctor in all the world, and I am sure Clover is all right by this time." But on the morrow she sent her little sister a story-book and a packet of chocolate-creams, and her sympathy for Nelly led her to do them up in a serge dress that she had torn in descending from a four-in-hand. Mrs. Danyers had told her to give it away, and she knew Nelly could darn it and use it for many a month to come.

One day Mr. Clifford-Leicester invited a party of friends to dine with him at the "Star and Garter," Richmond, and previously gave his guests a river-trip in a steam-launch. Iris thoroughly enjoyed the day; everyone seemed to take it for granted that she and the genial host were to have *tête-à-têtes*, and she accepted the position of queen of the *fête* with much satisfaction. After dinner, she and Mr. Clifford-Leicester enjoyed the moonlight together, and he gave vent to several quotations from the poets; he went no further, however, rather to the surprise of Mrs. Danyers. But everyone had noticed his attentions, and Iris felt the day had been worth living for. She had looked her best, and knew she had been quite the most tastefully attired of the ladies present; in a short time, she knew, Max Clifford-Leicester and all his possessions would be offered to her for her acceptance.

On her return home Iris found a card waiting for her. "The gentleman seemed very disappointed," said the footman, "to find nobody at home." The card bore John Hyldon's name, and he had pencilled upon it an address near the British Museum.

Iris decided to take no notice of the card; she knew John Hyldon had a spice of pride in his composition, and he would not be likely to call again unless he heard from her.

"Oh, how fortunate," she thought, "that we were out! Whatever could I have said to Mrs. Danyers? He might have flown into a passion and made a scene here, when I told him our engagement is ended; and what a good thing he did not see Leila! for he might have told her all about

everything, and somehow I would rather Leila did not know, she seems to look at things so differently from the rest of us. Leila puts me in mind of mother sometimes—oh, mother, mother, there is no face in all the world like yours! I was happier at the dear old home, but I must do the best for you and for Nelly and the rest," and Iris tore up the card, trying to convince herself she was forsaking John Hyldon from heroic motives of self-sacrifice.

CHAPTER VI.

AT THE ACADEMY.

EVERYBODY who was anybody was out of town, and Mrs. Danyers was about to follow the general example, but her "place" in Devonshire, a pretty country-house very dear to Leila, had been lately renovated, and as the drainage was found to be defective, all this had to be seen to ere the exodus could take place. Mrs. Danyers did not regret the delay, for Mr. Clifford-Leicester was detained in town at present by business, and she patiently waited with triumphant spirit till he should conquer his natural shyness sufficiently to offer his hand and heart to her young charge.

Certainly he was a man in the prime of life, and there were just a few grey lines to be seen upon his head; but she felt sure Iris would prefer him to anyone else amid their friends, and then his position at his banker's might assure him success, argued Mrs. Danyers, with any girl of common sense! The flowers and books that found their way to Iris were tokens of the proposal that was evidently upon the way; scarcely a day passed without some exquisite floral offering, yet the choice spoils of the florist's establishment never thrilled her nerves as the perfume of the lime-tree blossom beneath which in the past John Hyldon had won her promise.

It was half a relief to her, and half a pain, that "Jack" came no more to St. Alwys' Gardens; she concluded at last that he only ran up to town for a day or two, and that he had now gone back to his country work, convinced without further explanation that she must look higher now than a struggling journalist.

They had been several times to the Academy, but Leila wanted to take a young *protégée* of hers, with artistic talents, and Mrs. Danyers being in the best of humours just then, allowed her to invite the young teacher to lunch, and they all drove to Burlington House afterwards. Leila's friend had only two hours to spare, and would then have to hasten off; so the two girls wandered away, catalogue in hand. Mrs. Danyers strolled about with some acquaintances she met, and Iris accompanied them for awhile, but sat down by-and-by to rest before a lovely sunset-picture, till the group should return in her direction. She had not been there long when a sudden trembling took possession of her frame. She looked up, and found John Hyldon was beside her, looking at her with a grave, troubled face that nearly brought the tears to her eyes, though she quickly recovered her composure, resolved to end the interview before Mrs. Danyers returned.

"I am glad to have this opportunity of a conversation," he said, in a low voice; "you look well and happy, Iris, but you are very much changed."

"Time brings changes, of course," she said, trying to speak lightly; "besides, we do not dress in Kensington exactly as at dead-and-alive Bayston. So you are still in town, Mr. Hyldon?"

He paused for an instant, then remarked: "So it is to be 'Jack' no longer? I felt you had changed your mind, Iris, seeing you have ceased to write to me; but it would have been kinder to tell me the truth candidly."

He spoke so calmly, and with so little approach to a "scene," that Iris began to comfort herself with the feeling that the end of their engagement was not much of a trouble to him, and yet somehow this thought did not hold much consolation for herself.

"The fact is," she said, carelessly, "we were little more than boy and girl in bygone days; and in these times one has to learn to be practical. Since coming to London, I have moved, of course, in very different society from that of Bayston, and I have made many new acquaintances. I am convinced our engagement was a mistake—and, really, that Mr. Harper was quite insufferable! You never told me he was a milkman!"

"Never mind Mr. Harper," said John Hyldon, in stern, low tones that Iris had never heard from him before; "why do you not tell me the truth, that you have now the opportunity of advantages I am too poor to offer you? Be that as it may, I accept my dismissal, and I need scarcely say I wish you from my heart all happiness."

"Well," said Iris, "there is nothing settled—but—if anything occurs, you will see it in the papers. I am sure *I* wish *you* happiness, too; and, by the way, where shall I post that ring you gave me?"

"Put it over the nearest bridge to your house, and my letters, too," he replied; "oblige me by throwing them away somewhere. But before I wish you good afternoon, I feel it my duty to tell you they are having a very hard time of it at Lime-tree Grange, and Nelly has been working all day and half the night. I suppose you know Clover has been ill?"

"No, they never told me; at least, they said she had a cold, but colds are nothing."

"I suppose they found most of the home news unnoticed, so they would not trouble you more than needful," said Hyldon, gravely; "but Clover and Colin have had pleurisy, and your mother broke down through nursing. The doctor has been there constantly, and Nelly is greatly troubled, I know, how to pay his bill."

"Things will brighten for them soon," said Iris. "I certainly think Nelly should have told me more fully of their troubles, but Nelly was always a bad letter-writer, and I have had so little time lately to write home. Of course, I shall send off some jelly and things to them to-morrow—but now I must find my party, please."

Iris was growing nervous, for she felt sure that in the distance she recognised Mr. Clifford-Leicester, and it would be so awkward if the two came face to face!

John Hyldon lifted his hat, and turned away; he did not even wish her good-bye. She kept her gaze upon the picture before her till he had mingled with the throng, and then she looked in his direction, and nearly cried out to him to come back! But he was lost to sight; and Iris felt lonely and bewildered and intensely wretched.

"It was very cruel of him," she said to herself, "to tell me of all those home-troubles—he only wanted to make me unhappy. Poor darling mother! she shall never know care or trouble when once I am rich; it is my duty to stay on here and do the best I can to help them all. As for him, I believe he likes somebody else already, or he never, never could have spoken so quietly, or told me to throw that ring away! Well, it is no good thinking about it any more; the past is past, and I never, never could do again without the kind of things I am accustomed to now—I can't be poor, and I will not. I like Mr. Clifford-Leicester well enough.

and he is my fate, I must make up my mind to it; but, oh, dear, how tiring these pictures are, and how weary I am of these countless exhibitions! Surely it must be time for us to get away from this stifling place!"

"My dearest child, what has become of you? How faint and tired you look! Nothing makes one's head ache so much as looking at a collection of pictures. You see we have found a friend, and now we must all go and have some tea."

Mr. Clifford-Leicester lifted his hat to Iris, his eyes full of the admiration that Leila was able to recognise now, without even a heartache. Certainly there was just a little dimness across the pictures for her, as the two proceeded a little in front of her mother and herself, but she only answered by a good-tempered smile when Mrs. Danyers remarked, "Iris will be one of the richest women in London, Leila; I only wish I could hope to settle you as brilliantly; but Iris knows how to make the most of herself, and you have no self-confidence."

"Oh, mother dear," said Leila, "I am going to be your little old-maid daughter; you don't want to lose me yet, do you?"

"Well, I suppose I should miss you, Leila, though you *are* such an old-fashioned little thing; no one can be quite like one's own child, of course," said Mrs. Danyers, "but I hope one of these days you will marry as well as Iris Elwood."

Meanwhile there was a very eloquent silence between the two in front of them, for the gentleman was decidedly nervous, and somehow Iris was not in the best of spirits. It was not till they had had tea, and Mr. Clifford-Leicester was escorting the ladies to their waiting carriage, that he found courage and opportunity to whisper—

"I am leaving town to-morrow evening for a few days; with your permission I will call to-morrow afternoon to speak with you, before I go, on a subject of great importance to my happiness and my hopes."

Iris made no answer, but the colour leaped to her face, and he went away in a condition of unclouded assurance and anticipation. *(To be continued.)*

WAITING.

A LONG road stretching endlessly—
The little bats flitting against the light!
The red sun setting—and out to sea
The long grey cloud that foretells the night.

The smell of the hawthorn comes dull and faint,
The birds in the hedges have all grown mute;
All things seem under the same constraint,
Waiting the sound of a human foot——

* * * *

It does not come! and the sun goes down,
The tedious shadows wax and grow,
Not a speck, not a soul on the road to town.
What is it can have kept him so?

Baby trails her doll in the dust,
Father not here, and the sun gone down!
Don't fret, my sweet, but love him and trust,
He stays so long because he must,
Working for you in the weary town.

THE MOTHER'S QUIET HOUR.

AT a well-known college for ladies, there are twenty minutes reserved in every day for a quiet time. During that twenty minutes every young lady is expected to be in her room; there is to be no passing through the halls; there is to be no conversation, no laughter. What the young lady does in her room is between herself, her own conscience, and her God. She may read, she may study, she may pray, she may think, she may do what she likes; only she must not disturb other pupils in other rooms. For twenty minutes a quiet time!

Mothers! we ought to have *our* quiet hour; at least, we will say, our quiet quarter of an hour. I am afraid there are a great many of us who do not get even a quiet quarter of an hour once in twenty-four; that is little time enough. We are all cast too much in the active voice; we want, sometimes, to get in the passive voice. We are all the time at work; we do not know the sacredness of resting. We know how to toil and how to give; we do not know how to sit still and how to receive. This is the lesson, the very simple lesson, I want to bring to you. And more sacred than all the other resting-places is this Quiet Hour.

When the soul is quiet and the door is shut on the world, it can hear the voices of the invisible world and see the vision of the invisible world. How around us then do sometimes flock the forms of those who have gone before!

It may be that some of us can only snatch a quiet hour in the night season, when all about us is still. A long, long night of sleeplessness, of course, is hard indeed to bear; but an hour of wakefulness in the middle of the night seems to me a great boon. Do you remember how David used his wakeful hour? "I meditate on God in the night watches," he says. At such a time, within the heart's stillness there is opportunity for the entrance of God's sweet peace, which the distractions of the busy day far too often dispel, while the heavenly joy of soul communion with the Father of love may be ours. Then, too, when the city has hushed its noises, and the house is quiet, and the cares have fled away, and there is nought to do, and even duty itself has gone to sleep and will not wake until the morning, when it knocks again at the bedroom door—then is the time that we may see the dear ones who have gone above, and in their presence see the one Face that never has been seen by mortal eye, and hear the one Voice that never has been heard by mortal ear, and rejoice in the shining of that light which shines neither on land nor on sea.

Thanks be to God for sleep, and thanks for merriment, and thanks for home, and thanks for church, but most of all thanks for the Quiet Hour, lonely yet populous, when the soul communes with God and is still! A.

Waiting for Father.

(*Drawn by* MARGARET I. DICKSEE.)

PRACTICAL PAPERS ON EVERYDAY NURSING.

BY E. M. WATERWORTH, AUTHOR OF "MOTHERS AT HOME," "ABOUT OUR FOOD," ETC.

IX.—The Little Ones.

SOME years ago I spoke to you at great length on the management of our children in health, so you must forgive me if I repeat now anything I told you then; but I feel that all the mothers who will, I hope, read these papers, would consider I had made a great mistake if I were to leave out the ailments peculiar to children. I must, then, give the little ones a paper to themselves, which can be skipped by any readers who have nothing to do with them.

To begin with the wee ones, the tiny infants. People seem to think they can exist without warmth and air, and the consequence is, we see so many poor mites suffering from rickets.

RICKETS are produced by unwise feeding, so that the child is not properly nourished, and by want of air and light in rooms. If your child perspires much about the head, and his ankles and wrist-bones begin to look big, then you may know he will be rickety. You must give him warm, but light clothing; let him live in the fresh air all day, and leave the window open a little at night. Wash him all over every day. Dash sea-water or Tidman's sea-salt and water, or plain salt-and-water, over his back, his legs, and his arms every morning. Give him, if he is about ten or eleven months old, thirty drops of cod liver oil on the top of thirty drops of Parrish's Chemical Food twice a day. Let his diet be milk and water, with one teacupful of beef tea daily, and you will soon see an improvement.

Feed your children with care. Don't give a little one who has no teeth, things which require biting. It is perfectly wonderful how foolish some mothers are about the feeding of their children. They spend hours of thought on *clothing* them, but anything will do to feed them. Small wonder that so many children die of

CONVULSIONS.—Fits of this kind are brought on by irritation of the stomach caused by improper food, by teething, by worms, or by sudden fright. You should, of course, send for a doctor at once, and whilst waiting for him put the child in a hot bath of mustard and water, till the skin is red, and apply cold sponges to the head.

WORMS.—If your child grinds his teeth when asleep, and constantly fidgets or rubs his nose when awake, watch carefully to see if he has worms. Black rings under the eyes are also a sign of these things, and a terrible worry they are both to mother and child. If they proceed from injudicious food, as they often do, see that you alter that; but if you know there is no fault in that matter, then they come from natural weakness of the bowels.

First and foremost avoid all worm tablets and other patent medicines; you may kill the worms and you may also kill the child.

The following directions were given to me by a famous London physician who always recommended them to be tried first, instead of using injections which generally frighten a child so much.

Put a teaspoonful of salt in half a tumbler of water and see that the child has one teaspoonful of this about five minutes before every meal. Do not let him eat cabbage, grapes, or apples at all, and only very little well-cooked potato. Oranges and pudding raisins may be eaten, and dates and figs if carefully examined first.

Here is another treatment for a child of about four years old. Put a little tea in a breakfast cup, add thirty senna leaves. Pour boiling water over them and let them stand for ten minutes, strain off, mix with milk and sugar, and give it to the child to drink. The next day get a quarter of an ounce of the plant called Indian Pink from the chemist's. Put this into a teacupful of boiling water. Leave it soaking, and give the child one tablespoonful three times a day until it is finished, then go back to the senna leaves.

Whatever treatment you try, the child should have some tonic at the same time, specially designed to strengthen the parts where the weakness is.

COSTIVENESS is often a great source of trouble with young children, and should be counteracted in some way without using aperients, which, while they give relief for a time, only in the long run increase the mischief.

Home-made toffee or very brown sugar dissolved in the food will often affect a baby; if not, rub the stomach and bowels for ten minutes night and morning with warm olive or castor oil. A baked apple or some stewed prunes can be eaten the first thing in the morning by older children.

CROUP is both dangerous and alarming. Send for a doctor whether the child is attacked at night or in the day, and until he comes, give one or two teaspoonfuls of ipecacuanha wine in a little warm water, sweetening it to make it more agréeable. Repeat the dose every quarter of an hour till the child is sick.

If you have no ipecacuanha wine, warm mustard and water will do as well, it is a capital emetic. Put the feet in hot mustard and water till the skin is red, and apply a thick poultice half mustard and half linseed or bran on the top of the chest so that it comes well up to the throat. Keep a kettle steaming in the room. If you do any or all of this whilst waiting for the doctor, you will have the satisfaction of knowing you have not wasted a moment of time, which with young children's illnesses so often means life.

Children are always tumbling about, so it is well to know what to do when they hurt themselves. If a child should be stunned by a fall, lay him flat on his back, and sprinkle cold water on his face, sending for a doctor of course immediately.

For an ordinary bruise, there is nothing better than a small piece of fresh butter smeared constantly over the spot the moment the last lot has dried up. Olive oil will do if there is no butter at hand.

CHILBLAINS are amongst the minor troubles of childhood, but they are most tiresome things to bear. If possible prevent them, by warm woollen clothing to hands and feet, by keeping up the general circulation, and especially by taking care that the child is not allowed to come suddenly from intense cold to heat.

If the chilblains are not cracked at all, there are several safe remedies. Equal parts of camphorated spirit and lead lotion, or Goulard's extract; equal parts of sweet oil and spirit of turpentine; or one teaspoonful of sulphuric acid

may be mixed with ten of water. All these are very good if properly used; that is, well rubbed into the skin. But once more, they must not be thought of if the skin is the least cracked. Care must be taken in using the sulphuric acid as it is poisonous, and it will also burn holes in the linen.

If unfortunately the chilblains are broken, you had better dress them with an ointment you can make yourself of whiting mixed with melted mutton fat.

Only a few words more and I have done. Watch your children carefully. The expression of the face, the tone of the voice, the longing for quiet instead of eagerness for play—all these will forewarn the careful mother, and she will know that sickness of some kind is threatening.

Even when a child cannot speak, its very cry is a language to its mother.

The cry of pain is sharp and sudden. The cry of hunger is preceded by grunts and accompanied by rolling the head from side to side.

The cry of brain disease is a sudden shriek. The cry of general uneasiness is an irritable one, which ceases when the child is soothed.

When there is inflammation of the lungs, the child cries when it coughs and for a little while after.

An infant may have no language but a cry, yet that language is an eloquent one to a remarkable degree, if we take the trouble to study it.

THE ART OF SAVING.

THERE are various ways of saving money and preventing the waste of that which is useful, which housekeepers might practise with advantage, but which they oftentimes neglect. By making economy a habit, a great amount may be saved during the year. If one seeks financial success, it is necessary that the faithful account of every penny received or expended be kept; as so many unnecessary things may be dispensed with if one is obliged to confront the startling sums expended for mere nothings.

Your husband probably gives you what he can afford each month for the expenses of the table, clothing, and general articles of household use. *Then live within your means.* You will easily be able to find what you can afford for food, for clothing, and for general household needs; and, having carefully adjusted your expenditure, see that you never exceed the limit you have set yourself. I have practised this, and find it the only way to make both ends meet and lay by something for a "rainy day."

Of course, I do not mean this for people who have all the money they want to spend, but for those who have limited allowances. After following this plan for six months, it is safe to say that you will not fall back into the old way of housekeeping.

The old saying that a woman throws out with a spoon more than a man throws in with a shovel is true to some extent. Generally the head of the house gets what you tell him to, and you do not know of the expense of these things; but when you get and pay for these things yourself, you know what you are doing.

There is one thing I would strongly urge upon all who really wish to be saving and thrifty, and that is, that money must *not* be spent in trifles. "Trifles make up the sum of human life;" they certainly add very considerably to the sum of household expenses. Yet the peculiarity about them is, that the people who most indulge in them are the most unconscious of the fact. "Avoid spending money in trifles; of course," says the embarrassed house-mother. "That is what everyone says; but why repeat the advice to me? I never buy trifles. I have something else to do with my money."

Yet more likely than not the very next time this individual goes to market, a small purchase will be made which benefits no one, and which runs away with one of those pennies that must be put together before the pounds can be saved. It is a characteristic of unthrifty people that they readily yield to the temptation to buy trifles. It is said that workers among the poor, who try to get parents to save beforehand in order that their children may have a fortnight in the country, almost invariably find that the people who declare they are too poor to save, and that they cannot provide the eighteenpence or two shillings which are to constitute their contribution towards the treat, are the identical individuals who send off their children supplied with cheap sweets and shabby odds and ends of finery. The travelling costermongers and sweetstuff shops in poor neighbourhoods are supported almost exclusively by people who lay out pennies and halfpennies upon rubbish, yet who say they cannot afford to buy good food.

Keep strict account of every farthing that is spent, I repeat. Pay ready money for everything; and on no account let small purchases be put down to be paid for at some future time. "To pay ready money," said Mr. Emerson once, "is a great check on the imagination," and this is a chief reason why to pay ready money should be the rule with the provident house-mother bent on living within her means.

FLORENCE FORTESCUE.

HOW TO TRAIN THE CHILDREN.

1. FROM earliest infancy, inculcate instant obedience.
2. Unite firmness with gentleness. Let your children understand always that you mean what you say.
3. Never promise them anything unless you are quite sure you can give what you say.
4. If you tell a child to do something, show him how to do it, and see that it is done.
5. Always punish your children for wilfully disobeying you, but never punish them in anger.
6. Never let them know that they vex you, or make you lose your self-command.
7. If they give way to petulance or ill-temper, wait till they are calm, then gently reason with them on the foolishness of their conduct.
8. Never give your children anything because they cry for it.
9. Teach them that the sure and easy way to *appear* good is to *be* good.
10. Accustom them to make their little recitals with perfect truth.
11. Never allow tale-bearing.
12. Teach them self-denial, not self-indulgence.

A PEEP AT THE POTTERS.

BY FLORENCE H. BEAMISH.

WHEN one looks at the magnificent specimens of porcelain and china on view in London showrooms, it is hard to imagine that such snowy whiteness and such glowing colours are the product of a combination of articles certainly not very beautiful to look at nor very pleasant to handle, and that the articles themselves are brought to such a perfection of loveliness in a part of the country where smoke, ashes, and dirt abound. Yet such is the case. In the northern part of Staffordshire, as most of my readers are aware, with coal and iron mines beneath, and blast furnaces all around, stand what are known as the pottery towns, and here, amidst all that is black and dirty, the most beautiful specimens of art work are manufactured.

A Busy Burnisher.

Let us take up a cup and saucer. They are of beautiful white china, with a gold rim, and painted in a manner that would be described by any lady as "charming." They are so thin and so nearly transparent that we can almost see through them; they appear, in fact, too delicate for the hand to touch.

Again, look at that splendid vase. Where did you ever see such colours, such blending of tones, such perfect form? Surely, if we wish to find the birthplace of these things, we must search for some grand palace of magnificent architecture, with gilded columns and marble halls.

Nay, gentle reader, such things are fit indeed to grace a kingly bower, but their birthplace is lowly. Mother earth provides the materials, ordinary men and women do the work, and ugly-looking kilns put the finishing touch. The result we have in imagination before us.

There are various characteristics of the pottery country, and of the people dwelling there, that are little known to the vast majority of readers, even to those who are not altogether ignorant of pottery history, and some of these characteristics it may not be uninteresting to portray.

The first thing that strikes a stranger on reaching the pottery district is the black appearance of everything. She has, in fact, arrived at a "black country," that strongly reminds her of the district round Birmingham. Long chimneys, out of which volumes of thick black smoke are pouring, tell of iron works and blast furnaces, while groups of queer-shaped kilns add their quota of smoke, rendering the heavily laden atmosphere gloomy and depressing.

The pottery towns are Stoke, Hanley, Newcastle, Burslem, Tunstall, Fenton, and Longton. They are connected by railway and tramway, and contain altogether about 400,000 inhabitants, of which the borough of Stoke-on-Trent supplies nearly one-third.

A visit to a pottery is always interesting, and fraught with not a little instruction. Everywhere we see signs of ingenuity, of considerable talent, and—what is perhaps best of all—of steady, hard work. From the mixing-room to the show-room, the industry of the workers is everywhere apparent, and the work turned out by our English potters more than holds its own in competition with the world. The skill and quickness with which all the various operations are carried out are surprising, and no doubt will be expressed upon the statement that the potters are an exceedingly intelligent body of men and women.

Let us here take a peep at the potters at work, and at the articles which they manufacture. We will begin with the clay; for clay is, of course, the material of which all pottery is made. There are various kinds of clay for making pottery. There is the white china clay, or kaolin—the purest of all for potters, found in Cornwall, and used in making porcelain. Powdered burnt flint is also worked into the materials by some makers for certain wares, and the mixtures of clays and minerals for different classes of pottery are very varied. China is, of course, a popular name for porcelain, and is so called because it was originally manufactured in China.

The clay having arrived at the works, it is first prepared for the thrower. This is accomplished by grinding it, mixing it with water, and kneading it, to bring it to the consistency of dough. If necessary, it is also refined and sifted. It is mingled with water until it is as thin as cream, when it can be passed through a fine sieve and freed from specks of iron and stone, and all extraneous

A Flat-ware Presser.

Making Hollow-ware.

matter. The water can then be sufficiently dried off and the clay brought to a firm yet plastic state, suitable for working.

The "thrower" is the actual potter, the worker who actually manipulates the plastic clay and shapes it out on his potter's wheel—which is the historic name of the little revolving table—to the required design. He has often an assistant, who kneads the clay for him, and weighs it out; and in the making of flat-ware turns the handle of the large wheel.

Grasping a lump of clay, the potter tosses it between his hands once or twice, and then with unerring aim throws it on the centre of the little revolving table before him. Deftly, with finger and thumb or suitable tool, he fashions the fast-spinning lump into the vase, or whatever he desires to make, and, under his skilled touches, it speedily blossoms forth into a useful and shapely article; then finishing it off, he transfers it to a stand near by.

There are a good many sleights and dexterities of hand in the potter's trade. It often descends from father to son, the parent teaching the "tricks"—the ways of doing things—to his boy. And much strength, too, is required. No weakling can be a good potter. He must also have firmness of will and decision of purpose. Every touch, so to speak, must tell aright on the plastic clay. Every touch, from beginning to end, must tend to the satisfactory completion of the task. The potter goes straight ahead with his work with no hesitancy, and with no, or very little, correction of mistakes.

Even the man who simply makes handles must be a confident, clever workman. He grasps a small lump of clay, fashions it with his fingers to the required length, bows the upper part to the form it is to assume, then the lower part, touches the two ends to the jug or vase, and behold, the handle is made and affixed. And what seems to the novice the most remarkable part of it all, the handle retains exactly the shape last given it and adheres firmly to the body on to which it has been placed. No adhesive mixture is used. There is nothing but the two pieces of clay, yet when it has been allowed to dry and has been fired, the handle sticks, as everybody knows, with the most wonderful tenacity, even when carrying heavy jugfuls of water.

The beautifully-shaped vases that we all admire so much are, like the more common articles of pottery, all turned on the potter's wheel; and they are shaped so exactly to pattern, that hundreds of them could be made if necessary, and at any time. Moreover, the clay is so finely tempered, and sets so hard soon after leaving the thrower's hands, that before "firing"—as hardening it in the kiln is called—the vase can be fixed on a lathe, and, if too thick, may be pared down, while decorations can be added afterwards.

Such articles as are destined for this treatment are removed to the studios, where many artists of both sexes are at work. In some of the studios beautiful patterns and designs are scratched in the yet plastic clay. One woman may sketch animals most skilfully in this way. Like others who have to work with pottery, she has great decision of touch, and draws the animals straight off on the plastic clay. She cannot very well rub out a line if she makes a mistake. The figures must be drawn at once. Another, again, paints charmingly on tiles, which are so generally used now-a-days; still another is engaged in burnishing; while many other workers are to be met, all masters or mistresses of their own particular kind of decorative art.

But whatever the kind of decoration, the pottery finds its way at last to the kiln. Some kinds of pottery are fired three or even four times. Many are fired twice; first

At Work in the Painting-room.

to what is called the biscuit state, after which enamels or patterns of the various kinds of decoration are put on and the piece is fired a second time. The kilns are constantly watched night and day, and the firing is usually so arranged that they cool down on Sunday, and may be "drawn," as it is called—*i.e.*, the goods removed—on Monday. Thence the cups and saucers, plates and dishes, vases and what not, find their way finally to our homes for practical or decorative use.

One word more. If any of my readers have not done so, I would advise them to pay a visit to a good showroom, and also to inspect the pottery departments of the British and South Kensington Museums. While wondering at the beautiful articles before them, mostly exquisite in shape and admirable in colouring, and noting the varied points of difference between ancient and modern art in this direction, I trust they will let a kindly interest pervade their minds as they think of the toilers among the clay and dirt and smoke, whose efforts tend to make their homes and their lives cheerful and happy.

THE MASTER'S MESSAGES TO WOMEN.

BY MRS. CHARLOTTE SKINNER.

V.—To the Woman with Faults.

"Thou art loosed from thine infirmity."
—Luke xiii. 12.

WE have all got faults; some of us have a good number, and it is not the least use trying to think we are good enough. There is not even one physically perfect woman in the world, much less a morally perfect one.

Have you ever thought how much our faults are like diseases? *Selfishness* is like paralysis; *pride*, short-sightedness; *temper*, madness. And have you ever counted up the faults we have? *Procrastination, thoughtlessness, faultfinding, bad tempers, meanness, evil-speaking.* What a black list! In Galatians v. 19-21 is a still longer list of faults as seen from a man's standpoint. But as women, conscious of our own frailty, we have to confess each one applies as much to the feminine portion of the human family as to the masculine.

As women we have to mourn over many *secret faults*—secret malice, secret drinking, secret idolatry, secret pride, and such like.

One day a boat-builder was busy at his work, when all at once he lost his hammer. Nowhere could it be found. The boat he was building was soon afterwards finished. "I shouldn't wonder," said the builder, "if my hammer is inside the bottom of that boat," but he did not trouble to undo any of his work to find it. The fisherman went out to sea in his boat, never dreaming of danger, and his song kept time to his oars, and the melody of voice and waves prevented him from hearing the noise the hammer made in the keel of his boat as it rocked on the deep. A fisherman's wife watched in vain for the return of her husband, and when the tide cast his boat up on the shore, they found that the hammer, by its constant friction, had worn a groove in the bottom; at last the sea found entrance into the little vessel, and Death took away its passenger.

Suspected, or unsuspected, these secret faults bring trouble on many; seldom does the maker or owner suffer alone.

"The king doth speak as one which is faulty," spoke a brave woman once to King David. He could justly have replied, "What hour of the day, woman, is thy speech faultless?" Faulty in speech, faulty in heart, faulty in motive, faulty in action, well may we cry, from a full heart: "Deliver me from all my transgressions!" Then comes the sweet whispered message of the Master, "Thou art loosed from thine infirmity."

When our Lord was upon earth, among the many who sought His help was—

A Poor Crooked Woman.

What she looked like. Bent, twisted, deformed; putting you in mind of some old hawthorn tree that many winter storms have strained and shaped into grotesque outlines. There could have been no beauty of form or gracefulness of movement about her. Only the purest sympathy would have prompted any stranger to her character, to fold that crooked, bent body in a loving embrace.

"What did she look like?" How often that question is put! Why? Not simply because we are students of fashion, but because the appearance is so much used as an index to the character. But is the question often put, "What do *I* look like?" We look into our mirrors to study the set of our bonnets, and we wait for the verdict of husband or daughter as to the charm or otherwise of a new dress, but seldom consider as to what we look like from a character standpoint! If we were less easily offended, and our friends more outspoken, what revelations we might have as to what we look like! The angels who see us as we really are must often have strange unflattering photos of us, containing no more beauty than had that poor crooked woman who tremblingly made her way into the synagogue where Jesus was.

What she felt. She was not at all deceived as to her condition; she could never imagine she was a tall, graceful woman. And, oh, the pain of it all! Only in bars of gold at her feet did she know anything of sunset glories. The flowers cheered her, but she missed the stars. Faces of little children looked up at her with pity in their eyes, but the inspiration of the sight of a woman's face was not for her. She knew the world was beautiful, that men and women made in God's image moved about in it with grace and eagerness; but she knew also that she herself was but as the blasted thorn-bush in the garden of the Lord; and the hooting of the boys in the street, as she walked to and fro, only burnt the thought of her misery deeper in her heart.

The thought of sin should ever be abhorrent; and when conscious of our faults, conscious of our ugliness, we ought to despise ourselves utterly.

What she came for. She had made her way painfully along to the synagogue, that she might hear of God, the God who is "a strength to the needy in distress."

What followed proved she had come with a pure, right motive. We may be conscious of our faults, even mourn over them, yet not be willing to part with them, and often seek wrong ways of delivering ourselves from their bondage. We

never think of going to a chemist for calico—we should say that would be an absurd act; yet just as absurd are many of the ways some women go about to get rid of their faults.

What she heard. "When Jesus saw her He called her." We should think she was standing in a far corner behind all the rest of the people, but *He* saw her. The eye that notes the flight of the little brown sparrow as well as the growth of the tall cedars of Lebanon; that watches a solitary woman in a desert land as well as the king in crowded court, saw her. Not only saw, but *called.* The voice of the Liberator sounded in her ears. "Why did He not call me?" some proud dame may have remarked. Ah! He only calls those close to Him, who long for Him.

Do you long to be rid of your faults? Then listen for His voice. Some people say we have nothing to do with our faults, yet the whole Bible teaches that life is a warfare, a wrestling; but with Christ's power within us, we are more than conquerors.

What happened to her. She made her way to Him as fast as her trembling limbs and curious neighbours allowed, and then He put His hands upon her. Her astonishment must have been very great when she heard Him call her by name; but, oh, the thrill of joy that must have been hers when she felt His touch! And then, before the eyes of all, something happened far more wonderful than the budding into leaf of Aaron's rod. At the touch of His hands *she became straightened,* an upright woman. The broken reed became the erect palm-tree. Straightened, she could then *look up.* No more was the earth to be the centre of vision. Looking up, *she saw the Master's face.* O wondrous vision of delight! To look into those eyes of love was worth the burden of years. See the gleam of joy and delight spreading over her face! She is really growing beautiful! With the growing beauty her whole form seems energised. The broad outlook she now has gives her new views of things, so that no wonder *she began to glorify God*—that is, her spirit grew joyful and she sang praises. This is just in brief what happened to her. And just the very same things happen to those who overcome their faults. The same striking contrast there was between the crooked woman who entered the synagogue and the swinging, straight figure that left it, is to be found between the woman with faults and the woman who has listened to the message and is being loosed from her faults. Now, how was this woman really made straight? Simply by the power given her by Christ; and if we come to Him He will give us the power to overcome our faults. And oh, the joy of freedom! Do you not think the first thing that woman did when she got home was to have a praise meeting? I do.

Think of the shame of manacles. How many a prisoner tries hard to hide the handcuffs! Faults are manacles, keeping us from the joy of freedom.

"O to be free!" sighs many a weary prisoner, who would willingly toil for months, night and day, to win his way once more to sunlight and the free air of liberty. How long many a poor negro laboured to secure enough money to buy himself free! The little hoard used to be counted over and over again; and, oh, the bitter tears that were shed when time after time it was found to be not enough!

Christ offers to make us free without price. This crooked woman *believed* in our Master, and thus was made free. Every step she took towards Him was a step of faith. With the same faith we shall conquer our faults, "for this is the victory that overcometh, even our faith."

TALL WOMEN WANTED!

Soldiers have to be measured, and so have the women. At the gate of the Horse-Guards the soldiers are measured. We women may measure ourselves by the golden gates, for no unclean person, no drunkard, no idolater, no liar, no *unbeliever* can enter there. Are we reaching up to the full measure of purity?

May "He who is able to present you *faultless* before the presence of His glory, our Saviour," whisper His inspiring message to every woman's heart!

THE "TRYING" GUEST.

"I AM simply thankful she did not stay any longer! If she had prolonged her visit another week, I think she would have attended my funeral," said a frail little lady, half laughing, half crying, to whom I had offered congratulations on having had the pleasure (?) of a visit from a "dear friend."

In genuine surprise I said, "Why, I thought you loved her!"

"Well, I did at a distance, and I shall again when I get a little rested from the result of her visit. Now, don't think me hard to please, but she is the worst type of 'come to stay' visitors that one could have. The trouble is, she has no resources within herself to fall back upon, and though a woman in years, she wants to be constantly amused like a child; and so I have racked my brain and exhausted my little store of strength trying to entertain her, and yet she never said, 'Enough; let us rest.' Perhaps after working hard in getting up a picnic in her honour, I would reach home ready to sink from weariness, only to hear, 'Well, what next?' or, 'Where are we going this evening?' Oh, dear, I repeat, I am glad she has gone, for I was never so tired in my life." As my friend spoke she sank back in her chair, looking so wan and worn that I could not blame her for feeling as she did, or adding, "I feel now as if I never wanted to see company again."

I am so glad there is company *and* company. Who of us has not seen the difference in this respect in those we truly love? I never realised it more than when I listened to the foregoing words, and contrasted the feelings of the speaker with my own; for I, too, have just had a visit from a friend, but she was the reverse of the one who only left weariness behind her. She was full of "resources," capable of entertaining herself and all about her, and yet she liked a certain amount of quiet and rest. I readily understood that the domestic machinery need not stand still while she was in the house. If it made demands upon my time and strength I felt perfectly at rest about my guest, knowing that she could entertain herself with a book or a pen until I found leisure to enjoy a "feast of reason and a flow of soul."

Sisters, let us never be mere dead-weights to hostess or friend; and if our resources are but few, let us make haste to utilise them. We owe it as a duty to be pleasant and helpful wherever we are, but especially when amongst those who have extended to us their hospitality. Depend upon it, our visits will be enjoyable to the degree that we ourselves give happiness.

MAUD G. FORSTER.

"FOR BETTER, FOR WORSE."

BY M. B. MANWELL, AUTHOR OF "THE BENTS OF BATTERSBY."

"WELL, I wonder how it will turn out! They are a couple of firebrands, Milly Bland and Kit Archer. Apart, they couldn't do so much mischief, but bind them together, and a pretty blaze will be the result, or we're much mistaken."

"We shall see, we shall see!" That is what the little world to which Kit Archer and Milly Bland belonged said when the news got abroad that those young people had become engaged to be married. Milly was the village dressmaker—a tall, well-set-up girl, fair and wholesome-looking, who earned enough, by her nimble needle and skilled fingers, to keep herself and her frail, rheumatic grandmother.

Kit Archer was one of the most promising of the gardeners at the Hall, where lived my lord, the owner of the village and the tract of smiling, well-cultivated country surrounding it. It was said that both my lord and her ladyship set great store on Kit's knowledge of, and ability with, flowers. He had been promoted to the orchid house, and was entrusted there with the rearing of many a costly plant for which more than its own weight in gold had been paid. Somehow, Kit was always successful, and had it not been for a glaring infirmity of his, the young gardener would have been on the highway to future fame as a horticulturist. An ungovernable temper was his bane, and the cause of many a pitfall into which his feet stumbled, tripping him up.

As a rule, love is made up of contrasts, but Kit Archer had given his heart away to Milly Bland long before he was old enough to know he had done so. That Milly, no other, should be his wife had been his boyish dream. Milly was of his mind; happily, she was willing enough. But, unhappily, all the dowry she could bring was a temper as fiery as Kit's own. As yet, in the bliss of "love's young dream," these volcanic natures had not clashed; all was fair sailing, smooth and peaceful as a lake in a summer calm. Neither of the betrothed pair would have listened for a moment to the warnings of outsiders against each other.

When were young lovers aught but intolerant of the world's interference?

"Milly darling, when will you fix the day!" Kit coaxed and urged; and though Milly pretended she could not possibly listen to his pleadings for perhaps years to come, still her coy denials grew fainter and fainter until, at last, he won a whispered consent that the wedding should be after harvest was over, and before partridge-shooting began, when my lord would be down and fussing over the orchids which were his fad.

They were a good-looking pair, the bride and the bridegroom, and the village was proud of them on the glowing August day when the two stood before the altar to be made one

The little home Kit had prepared for his wife was a pretty cottage smothered with Virginia creeper, which the early autumn frosts were blushing a vivid red by their kisses To the newly-wed pair it was a veritable Garden of Eden, where nothing was too good for his beautiful Milly, thought and said aloud the young gardener. And Milly did her utmost to keep the pretty home as dainty and neat as she had found it.

So time went on, with flying feet, until winter was halfway over.

"Kit, do you know they're saying up at the Hall that you're too good to be under anybody—that you ought to be the head of some place yourself? More, they declare you ought to try for a high post in one of the great public gardens in London itself. So you should! Oh, Kit, I'd love to live up there, instead of pottering away in this wretched, dull country!" Milly was secretly ambitious, and her imagination had been fired by descriptions of the gay life of the great city.

"Then, I shouldn't, my girl! And, what's more, I wouldn't, and that's an end of it!"

Was it actually Kit who spoke thus curtly? Milly could scarce believe her ears.

"Well," she exclaimed, in a sharp voice, "you might keep a civil tongue in your head, Kit!"

The crisply-spoken words were like oil on the fire. Kit had been ruffled early that morning about a trifle—an oversight on his part, detected and pointed out, in one of the forcing-houses. The incident had rankled; his slumbering temper had stirred and awoke. Before Kit and Milly knew what they were about, they had both said words that pierced like rapiers into each other's hearts. Banging the cottage-door, Kit strode away to the greenhouses, with a moody brow; while Milly knocked about the pretty china breakfast things as she washed them up. For the first time, the pair realised most vividly each other's tindery natures.

"She's a fury, that's what she is!" muttered Kit, with a brain on fire, handling the fragile blossoms his work lay among more roughly than he had ever done in his life.

"He's a sulky, obstinate mortal. I wish I'd never seen him!" hysterically sobbed Milly, and she threw herself into a chair, determined not to stir a hand to prepare the nice little dinner she had meditated. When Kit returned at noon there was no meal ready, and no Milly visible.

Thunderstruck, the young husband felt a wild fury bubbling up in his veins, and rushed from the cottage in a state of mind difficult for calmer temperaments to comprehend. Striding back to the hot-houses, everything there seemed to go wrong. Heart and brain alike seething with anger, Kit made a false step on the top of a ladder. Crashing, smashing, down came the strong man, his head breaking a pane of glass on the way before he reached the tiles with a heavy thud. Kit was alone in the hot-house, and there he lay unconscious, his head and face stained with blood from the broken glass, his leg broken in two places.

So they found him, after an hour, still stunned and motionless.

Milly Archer is never likely to forget her first quarrel with her husband, and his home-coming after it. Dead as she believed the lifeless-looking form to be, her grief broke out in a storm. And the sharpest sting of that grief was overwhelming remorse. To have sent Kit away in burning anger and dinnerless to meet such a fate, seemed to her the crown of her sinning. Writhing in despairing repentance, she threw herself on the breast of her lost Kit, and had to be forcibly wrenched away. Milly's nature was a highly excitable one, and the shock resulted in an attack of brain fever. Weeks after, when she crept out of the

"Kit plucks a scarlet bloom to dazzle baby's eyes." *p.* 142.

delirium, spent and feeble, she nearly had a relapse, for sitting by her bedside was a sorry figure, it is true, with many a cut and bruise still unhealed, halt and maimed; but it was Kit himself, not his ghost! Joy seldom kills. Milly's heart gave a wild leap of thankfulness. God had indeed been good!

"Oh, Kit, my Kit! I've not killed you, then!" she sobbed, weakly.

"Whisht!" said Kit, cheerily. "You've got to make haste and get well, my girl. I want somebody to cook my dinner, dear!"

Not a word would Kit suffer, then, about the dire result of the first clashing of his temper and Milly's. But in the long hours of convalescence on either side there were sober talks between husband and wife. Each had received a lasting impression—indeed, a lesson clear and convincing, and emphasised by great personal suffering. They both, having had their warning of what hasty words may lead to,

resolved, God helping them, to profit by the terrible lesson.

"It was 'for better, for worse,' Kit, wasn't it?" whispered Milly. "Well, I'll take your temper in hand, and you take mine. How will that do?"

It seems to do, and excellently well, too. Kit, hale and sound of limb as of old, has had another lift in life. My lord, overjoyed at the successful rearing of a particularly rare orchid, promoted Kit to be second head gardener, with a new house in the Park. If their first abode were a bower, the present one excels it for beauty; and the rarest blossom in it is a human one, the baby-daughter who has come to bloom in the rising young gardener's home.

"She's got your pretty looks, Milly!" says the proud father, as they sit one evening among their wealth of flowers.

"But she has your dark eyes, Kit!" retaliates the radiant mother. There is a happy silence.

"Well, Milly," Kit breaks in, "let's hope she hasn't got either of those old tempers of ours, anyway!" and Kit plucks a scarlet bloom to dazzle baby's eyes.

"She can't possibly!" laughs the contented wife. "Because they're dead and gone long ago!" Then she adds, gravely, "Thank God!"

To which Kit softly says, "Amen!"

LITTLE FEET.

LITTLE feet so glad and gay,
Making music all the day,
Tripping merrily along,
Filling all my heart with song,
Oh! well I love your music sweet.
Patter, patter, little feet!

Sometimes, anxious, I would know
Just what way these feet must go,
Praying oft that all be fair,
Thorns nor roughness anywhere.
May flowers spring their steps to greet!
Patter, patter, little feet!

But when I think that some have trod
Through thorns and briers nearer God,
Though weak in faith, I still would dare
To offer up the earnest prayer
That Christ would choose whate'er is meet.
Patter, patter, little feet!

I press them in my hands at night
And kiss them with a new delight,
Believing that where'er they go,
My tender Lord will lead them, so
They'll walk at last the golden street.
Patter, patter, little feet!

Hints for Busy Housewives.

WRINKLES.—These unpleasant marks may be removed from the face by the persistent use of hot fomentations and the massage treatment.

Protection against Cholera.—The imperial health officer of Berlin says that the juice of both the orange and the lemon is fatal to the cholera bacillus in a few hours.

Children's Bedrooms.—Children rest more quietly in rooms well ventilated, though the air is quite cool during the night, than when they sleep in warmer and closer rooms, and it is well to accustom their lungs to cold air in this way. It is very undesirable to make hothouse plants of children. They should be dressed warmly, both by night and by day, so that they can be comfortable in rooms moderately cool.

Easily-made Blancmange.—Soak an ounce of gelatine in water to cover it for an hour, pour a pint of boiling milk upon it, and stir it till dissolved. If the gelatine is not quite dissolved, stir it over a slow fire for a few minutes. Sweeten it to taste with crushed white sugar, and strain it through muslin. Flavour it pleasantly with a few drops of essence of vanilla, bitter almonds, or orange flower water; mix half a pint of cream with it, and mould it when quite cold and almost ready to set. If preferred, the cream can be omitted, and an additional half-pint of milk can be used instead. Blancmange of this sort is excellent when put into a mould which has had a gallipot placed in the centre. When it is turned out, and the gallipot is removed, the hole in the middle can be filled with stewed fruit.

How to Keep Milk in a Bottle Sweet.—When milk has to be bottled, to be used on a journey, or sent away for any purpose, it may be kept sweet for a time even in hot weather, if a little lime-water (two tablespoonfuls for a pint of milk; four tablespoonfuls for a quart of milk) be put into the bottle before the milk is poured in. To keep milk cool as well as sweet, wrap the bottle first in a wet cloth, afterwards in a dry one. When bottles that have been used for conveying milk are brought home, they should be washed immediately and thoroughly in soda and water, rinsed well, and left uncorked. Lime-water can be bought at the druggist's, but it can be much more economically made at home thus: Get a quarter of a pound of fresh lime (builders' lime, that is), put it into a bowl, pour about six pints of boiling water upon it, and stir it well. Cover it at once, let it stand for three hours, and pour off the clear fluid into bottles to be used as required. Refill the vessel containing the lime with fresh water; it can be used again and again. Lime is more soluble in cold water than it is in boiling water. The advantage of boiling the water is that it is thereby rendered purer.

An Economical Soup.—Housewives will be glad to know that a cheap and nourishing dish may be made from the preparations known as Edwards' Desiccated Soup. There are four different kinds—brown, tomato, white, and gravina. The price is very moderate, and we recommend housewives to try them, feeling sure they will be pleased to have so wholesome a soup ready to hand. The printed directions for use are most simple and explicit.

How to Dry Wet Shoes.—When, without overshoes, you have been caught in a heavy rain-storm, perhaps you have known already what to do with your best kid boots which have been thoroughly wet through, and which, if left to dry in the ordinary way, will be stiff, brittle, and unlovely. If not, you will be glad to learn what I heard only recently from one whose experience is of value. First wipe off gently with a soft cloth all surface water and mud; then, while still wet, rub well with kerosene oil, using for the purpose the furred side of Canton flannel. Set them aside till partially dry, when a second treatment with oil is advisable. They may be deposited in a conveniently warm place, where they will dry gradually and thoroughly. Before applying French-kid dressing, give them a final rubbing with the flannel, still slightly dampened with kerosene, and your boots will be very little affected by their bath in the rain.—*G. W.*

Frying.—When frying, always have a clear, bright fire and a well-swept chimney.

Dirty Carpets.—To cleanse carpets, put four tablespoonfuls of ammonia to one bucket full of water; scrub with a medium brush, wipe with a cloth, just as you would in cleaning an unpainted floor. Change the water frequently. Leave the windows open and the carpet will soon dry. The carpet should be thoroughly swept before it is scrubbed.

THE GIRL BEHIND THE COUNTER.

SHOPPING! If there is one thing which helps to break the monotony of a woman's life, at least in our large towns, I think it is shopping. To leave the home cares and work for a short while, and spend the time in "window peeping," is a recipe for overworked mothers which can almost compete with a doctor's prescription. Of course, it is more charming still if one is fortunate enough to possess a well-filled purse, and can gratify one's taste by purchasing the silk and satin, china and glass, and the thousand and one things which the enterprising shopkeeper knows only too well will attract feminine fancy. Happily, few of us but have an opportunity of obtaining, at one time or other, some of the good things we desire. And it is while making our purchases that I wonder how many ladies have a thought as to the obliging, patient girl who serves behind the counter? As she takes down box after box of ribbons and laces to display to us who are *seated* at the other side of the counter, do we ever think of her weary, exhausted condition, or of the many long hours she is compelled to *stand* while endeavouring to please her often fastidious customers?

"Think of the girl who serves you."

Now, I should like to say a few words to lady readers on this really important question of seats for the girl assistants in our shops. Already it is demanding public attention. Recently an appeal for seats for these girls was circulated in Dublin, and at once it was signed by over 1,400 ladies, chiefly wives and mothers, who understand the illnesses and life-long delicacies produced by the wasting and unbearable standing during long business hours. Over 140 eminent doctors have also signed this appeal.

Really, there is *no need* for this cruelly long standing—in some cases for more than twelve hours every day—and it is our duty to see that it is immediately discontinued. In many of the States of America proprietors of business houses are compelled by law to provide seats for their assistants; and in the city of New York, where business pressure is certainly as severe as in any town in our country, seats are supplied without any law to enforce the giving of them.

An immense volume could be filled with details of hundreds of cases of illness, disease, and death resulting from long standing in shops. "The consequences of the constant, long, weary standing," writes one who has fully studied the subject, "on the health of girls and young women are *cruel to an extreme.* I would not for one moment exclude females from business employments, because in many instances they are able to perform the duties devolving upon them much better than men; but I wish to see the conditions of their labour such as can be borne without injury to them, and with benefit to the community. As matters now stand, we have a harsh and cruel system forced upon young and old indiscriminately, without any regard to difference of age, sex, or physical capacity."

The majority of female assistants have, I take it, been well and carefully trained under the supervision of respectable parents, and large numbers of both sexes rush to towns, fresh from the country, with sound constitutions, and abundance of health and vigour; but the long standing soon does a fatal work. Rosy cheeks and full round faces speedily become pale and emaciated; the features sharpen, and the complexion assumes a yellow, unhealthy tinge. The eyes part with their lustre, and show the ominous sinking and darkness; the expression loses its sparkling vivacity, and becomes stolid and sad. The legs swell, the back aches, and innumerable internal complaints supervene. Dyspepsia shows itself, the mind and nerves become shaken—a slight cough follows, which in numberless cases produces consumption,—and, in fact, the whole system—mind and body—begins to wither and decay, evolving different forms of infirmity and disease, until the poor victim of this vicious system either drops into a premature grave, or passes the remainder of life in bodily suffering—a burden to herself, and, as compared with her former state, a mere wreck of humanity. This is no high colouring. Thousands of girls and young women may be found in our large towns ready to prove by their own sufferings and impaired constitutions that what I state is rather within than beyond the mark.

Now, a great responsibility rests on customers to bring their influence to bear upon employers to put a stop to this system of compelling constant standing. Several establishments have already provided seats for their assistants, and in every instance they have found that doing so has added to their efficiency, and has in no way tended to idleness or proved a disadvantage to customers.

Surely parents, who have daughters of their own, will do their utmost to forward the good cause in hand, and endeavour to put down this heartless system. Next time, kind-hearted mother, when, wearied with shopping, you sink into a chair politely handed to you by a shop-assistant, think of the girl who serves you behind the counter; remember that she has been standing there all day, and has no prospect for to-morrow but the same wearying, pitiless round, and do not rest satisfied until you know that a seat has been provided for her, on which she can rest during the few moments that she is not actually engaged at work. You will then have the satisfaction of feeling that you, at least, have helped to strengthen the body, increase the happiness, and brighten the life of "somebody's daughter," though she may be a humble servitor behind a counter.

W. T.

HINTS ON HOME DRESSMAKING.

ONCE more the chilly mornings remind us that autumn is approaching, and that some preparation in the way of warmer garments must be made. Ladies as well as children are wearing the pelisse, which is in reality only another name for a long mantle. It is, however, a very useful garment to possess, and whether made in thin tweed, cheviot, or shower-proof cloth, it is much more comfortable and healthy to wear than a mackintosh. We lately saw such a pelisse made after a much improved pattern, the body part being tight-fitting and having a sort of dolman sleeve, which gave plenty of room for the large dress sleeve. Then there was an added bell-shaped skirt, and over this a pelerine cape which reached about as far as the waist. Speckled-brown tweed was used, and the over-cape was trimmed with silk marabout of the same brown shade. Such a trimming, however, is not at all necessary when the garment is to be used for wet weather. The edges could be turned under and stitched, or trimmed with military braid. We have not been able to illustrate a pelisse of this sort, but can supply a pattern to any of our readers requiring one.

Fig. 33.

Draped dress skirts seem to be gaining upon us more and more, and sooner or later we shall all be adopting panniers, polonaises, and tunics.

Fig. 33. This pattern shows a little girl's dress made in fine grey woollen, with a yoke and sleeves of puffs of white stuff, or shot velvet might be used if preferred. Below this the material is set on to the yoke in gathers, or loose pleats might be used instead. A crossway band of material edged with very narrow velvet or ribbon is set on to the yoke so as to cover the join between the yoke and skirt, and a wider one is also used down the entire length of the skirt on the left side. A sash of the material is added, finishing at the back with a knot and ends. The skirt should be lined with sateen unless cotton material is employed, when a wide hem and a few tucks would be a suitable finish for the bottom of the skirt.

Fig. 34.

Fig. 34. Here we illustrate another neat dress for a girl between the age of six and ten. The body is made over a fitting lining, and is gathered on the shoulders with three or four runners, a narrow heading being left to form a frill round the neck. The stuff is also drawn in with gathers at the waist. A bell-shaped skirt, slightly eased into the waist, is used, gathers being unnecessary. It should be lined, and trimmed with rows of plain and fancy braid. The sleeve has a puff at the top, over which an epaulette is made to fall. The pleated waistband should be lined with a piece of stiff muslin.

Fig. 35.

Fig. 35 depicts one of those neat, useful dresses which our readers always appreciate. The body is made over a fitting lining, and has a deep frill set into the neck at the back, and taken down in points in front. The sleeve is also made over a tight-fitting lining and has a long, full puff set into a cuff at the wrist. A bell-shaped skirt is used, but it is cut fuller at the back than usual, and falls in graceful pleats at the bottom of the skirt. Narrow trimming edges the frill and skirt, and also trims the waistband, finishing with bows at the back. Velvet or ribbon will answer very well for this trimming, but some will prefer gimp or beads.

Fig. 36. In this pattern we have a comfortable suit for a boy from seven to ten years of age. A coat in the shape depicted is not at all difficult to make, although there is a little more work in it than in a sailor suit. A well-mixed pattern in Scotch tweed will be very suitable material for a suit of this kind, and will not show the dirt so quickly as a plain material. It should be lined throughout with Italian cloth, and for big boys it will be well to place a piece of tailor's canvas between the lining and the cloth, especially at the fronts. The seams of the cloth should be stitched and pressed well, and the lining felled down to it afterwards. The edges of the coat can be bound with braid or stitched with the machine, in which latter case the lining should be felled down after the stitching is done. Unbleached calico is perhaps the strongest and most economical lining that can be used for the knickers. It is always well to purchase enough material to make two pairs, as the coat will generally last much longer than the knickers, while it is sometimes difficult to match the cloth when the second pair is required. Two yards of tweed should make a coat and two pairs of knickers for a boy of about ten years of age.

Fig. 36.

Flat patterns can be supplied. Figs. 33, 34, 35, and 36, also lady's pelisse with dolman sleeve, 6½d. each. Address, "M. C. Pattern," 9, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.